

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for protecting a passenger located in a first vehicle seat including a seat back, the apparatus comprising an air belt located in the lower portion of the seat back and configured to deploy along a back surface of the seat back to thereby protect a lower half of the body of a passenger sitting on a second seat positioned behind the first vehicle seat; and

a seat belt apparatus for restraining the passenger sitting on the first vehicle seat, the seat belt apparatus including a belt buckle, a lap anchor, and a lowering mechanism for lowering at least one of the buckle and the lap anchor, wherein the air belt is disposed in the first vehicle seat and decreases in length by inflation to thereby act as a driving power source for the lowering mechanism.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, ~~further comprising a~~ wherein the seat belt ~~[[that]]~~ is configured to be pretensioned when the air belt is inflated.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 3, ~~further comprising a~~ wherein the belt buckle is configured to move downward when the air belt is inflated to thereby apply a pretension to the seat belt.

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 3, ~~further comprising a~~ wherein the lap anchor is configured to move downward when the air belt is inflated to thereby apply a pretension to the seat belt.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein movement of the belt buckle is limited to the downward direction.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein movement of the lap anchor is limited to the downward direction.

8. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the air belt is operatively connected with at least one of a-seat the belt buckle and a-seat the belt lap anchor so that when the air belt inflates and decreases in length the at least one of the buckle and the lap anchor move downward.

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein ~~the connecting between~~ the air belt and the at least one of the buckle and the anchor are operatively connected by ~~[[is]]~~ a wire.

10. (Original) The apparatus of clam 9, wherein movement of the wire is limited to one direction.